assistance is provided to Universities/Organisations/Social Science Research Institutes for conducting action oriented research and evaluative studies on development of Scheduled Castes. A total amount of Rs. 64,000/- was released to two such Research Agencies during 1990–91 for conducting research studies in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The amount is reported to have been spent by them.

Opening of New Regional Passport Offices at Siliguri and Ranchi

1510. SHRI PIUS TIRKEY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to open Regional Passport Offices at Siliguri in North Bengal and at Ranchi in South Bihar;

(b) if so, the time by which these are likely to be opened;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the criteria being adopted by the Government in opening a Regional Passport Office at places other than the State capitals?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Due to administrative and financial constraints, it is not possible to open more Passport Offices in the near future.

(d) The size of population in catchment area of a passport office, equitable distribution of passport offices all over India, propensity of a population to apply for passports, geographical location of a passport office and availability of resources for the purpose etc. are usually the parameters based on which opening of a Passport Office is decided.

World Bank Assistance to Andhra Pradesh for Development of Fisheries

1511. SHRI J. CHOKKA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank propose to provide assistance to the Government of Andhra Pradesh for the development of brackish water shrimp and reservoir projects in the State;

(b) if so, the details of assistance proposed to be given; and

(c) the present status of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The estimated total project cost is Rs. 88.13 crore comprising Rs. 80.79 crore for the brackish–water shrimp culture component; Rs. 5.61 crore for the reservoir fish culture component and Rs. 1.73 crore for project management. About 90% of the total cost is expected to be provided by the World Bank as the total assistance for this project.

(c) This project was approved by the World Bank in the meeting of the Executive Board of Directors held at Washington on 14.1.92. The project will become credit effective from 1st May, 1992 for implementation over a 7 year period."

Epizootic Ulcerative Syndromes

1512. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome found in the fish species in lakes of central Kerala has been brought under control; and

(b) if not, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b). Government of Kerala have informed that the fish epidemic is not spreading any more. However, Government have issued guidelines to take various measures to contain this disease, like;

i) Treatment of the affected manageable water areas with lime and salt;

ii) Treatment of affected fish with potassium permagnate; and

iii) To maintain hygienic condition in open waters.

Foodgrains Production

1513. DR. ASIM BALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether per hectare productivity of foodgrains in Punjab is much higher than national average; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The yield rate of total foodgrains in Punjab during 1990-91 was 3390 Kgs. per hectare as against the All India average yield rate of 1382 Kgs. per hectare.

The higher per bectare productivity of foodgrains in Punjab may be attributed to higher proportion of irrigated area, greater diffusion of modern technology of high yielding varieties, higher fertilizer consumption per unit of area, better infrastructure and favorable agro-climatic conditions.

Regional Research Institute for Black Goat

1514. DR. ASIM BALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of West Bengal has submitted a proposal to the Union Government for setting up of a Regional Research Institute for black goat in the district of Midnapore;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the decision taken thereon; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K.C.LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). The issue of setting up of regional stations was examined in general by the ICAR Review Committee, which was headed by Dr. G.V.K. Rao, former Member of the Planning Commission. This Committee has advised against setting up of new regional stations and has, instead, suggested that work of the regional importance may in future be done by the State Agricultural Universities. Since this recommendation has been accepted by the ICAR, the proposal to establish the Eastern Regional Research Centre of Central Institute for Research on Goats at Midnapore, West Bengal has not been accepted. Instead ICAR has instructed the Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya to take up research on Goats.